



# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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July 23, 2002

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist *RB*

RE: Site Inspection, Rock-It Stone Works, Inc., Unpermitted Operation near the Strawberry River, S/013/008, County, Utah

Date of Inspection: April 4, 2002

Time of Inspection: About 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (not continuous during this time)

Conditions: Mostly clear, 70's

Participants: Travis Clayburn and Shannon Peatross, Rock-It Stone; Lynn Kunzler and Paul Baker, DOGM

## Purpose of Inspection:

The Division received a citizen's complaint from Chris Lang who lives in the area. He indicated mining activities were occurring, including blasting. Mr. Lang and his wife own a home about one-half mile east of the quarry, and adjacent to their home, they have a facility designed for small group meetings, especially retreat-type meetings. They are concerned that the mining activity could disrupt their clients and their business. They particularly expressed concern about noise levels, dust, and water contamination.

## Getting to the site:

Traveling east on US 40, go about 3.2 miles past the General Store in Fruitland and turn south toward the Strawberry Pinnacles. At the Pinnacles, turn east and travel along the Strawberry River. It is about 10.4 miles from US 40 to the site.

## Observations:

According to Mr. Clayburn and Mr. Peatross, the site was previously worked by another operator, and Rock-It Stone Works recently took some samples of the stone to see if it was marketable. To do so, it was necessary to move some of the piles of smaller rock and fines, but this work was done without an exploration or small mine notice of intention. They were able to sell the stone and anticipate being able to sell more, so they would like to begin operating as soon as possible.

The site is immediately adjacent to the road going along the Strawberry River. There are several large rocks delineating the perimeter. There is a trackhoe on site together with several pallets. One of the tracks on the trackhoe is broken, and some oil has leaked from the boom on to the ground.

We took a few GPS readings, and from these, we estimate the site covers about 1.5 acres.

We talked about topsoil salvage and reclamation plans. There is little soil that could be salvaged on top of the rim, and it would be very dangerous to try to gather this soil. In the area next to the road, there might be some soil on the east end that has not been affected by mining operations, but the rest of the site has already been disturbed. We suggested that the operator request a variance for topsoil salvage, but it would probably be possible to salvage some soil in a few areas. We suggested that the fines that will be left may need to be amended to re-establish vegetation. Final revegetation of the site will probably be to agricultural uses. We informed the operator that this would be acceptable.

The operator may also want to request a variance for highwall reclamation. There are natural cliffs all along both sides of the valley, and the area the operator intends to mine is a cliff.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

The operator needs to file a notice of intention with the Division as soon as possible. It will be necessary for the Division to obtain a clearance from the State Historical Preservation Office, and we do not know if a cultural resources survey will be needed.

The oil leak on the trackhoe needs to be repaired, and the contaminated soil should be cleaned up.

We talked about the possibility of the operator hauling stone west from the mine to US 40 rather than east past the Langs' home. Mr. Peatross indicated the intersection on the west side is very dangerous, and Mr. Kunzler and I confirmed this assessment.

As discussed above, Chris Lang is concerned about the effect the mine will have on his business and lifestyle. Although it does not appear there are any "fatal flaws" that would prevent mining this area, the operator could take a few steps to appease Mr. Lang and reduce the effects mining might have. These include

- Contact Mr. Lang before doing any blasting to see if he will have clients when the blasting is planned. If so, attempt to reschedule the blasting to a better time. The operator indicated that they will only need to blast 2-3 times a year.
- Try to schedule hauling the rock at times when it would be least disruptive of Mr. Lang's business. The operator indicated that he anticipates only 2 – 3 trucks per week.
- Be diligent about controlling dust at the mine. The road is the responsibility of Duchesne County, but it would help to control dust if the operator's trucks maintained a slow speed, especially when traveling by the Langs' home and business.

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- Use a portable toilet, and be careful about oil leaks or anything else that might contaminate surface or ground water.

Most of these could be done with just some thoughtfulness, and they would demonstrate concern and good will on the part of the operator.

We understood that the County granted the operator a conditional use permit although we are not aware of the requirements associated with the permit. Because the operation would be immediately adjacent to the road, there should be concerns about its effects on traffic. The road would need to be closed occasionally when the operator blasts.

jb

Enclosures: Map, Photos

cc: Shannon Peatross, Rock-It Stone  
Chris Lang, adjacent landowner

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Photographs of Unpermitted Rock-It Operation  
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